Facts &
DETAILS

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What is COVID-19?

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is a novel (new) coronavirus first reported in Wuhan, China in December 2019. SARS -CoV-2 causes the human respiratory illness coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Human coronaviruses were first identified in the mid-1960s. Seven sub-groups are known to infect people, including several that cause the common cold. MERS-CoV (which causes Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), SARS-CoV (which causes severe acute respiratory syndrome), and the 2019 novel coronavirus infect animals and have evolved to make people sick.

How common is COVID-19?

The risk to people in the United States is low. People who have traveled to a country or an area with widespread or ongoing COVID-19 community transmission are at greatest risk of infection.

Thousands of COVID-19 cases have been identified in globally, with symptoms ranging from mild to severe. COVID-19 cases have been reported in the United States. Several cases have had history of travel from a country with ongoing COVID-19 transmission, but some have been linked to community spread. All United States cases have been identified through public health screening and monitoring systems.

How do people become infected?

Similar to other coronaviruses, COVID-19 is likely spread by droplets from an infected person's nose or mouth through coughing and sneezing or by touching a contaminated surface.

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Reports show that COVID-19 causes mild to severe respiratory illness. Some people have died from the infection. Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Some patients have developed pneumonia.

After exposure, COVID-19 symptoms typically appear within 14 days.

How long can a person spread COVID-19?

Someone with COVID-19 is most contagious once they develop symptoms. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working with public health agencies and scientists to learn more about COVID-19.

Who is at risk for COVID-19?

Anyone who is exposed to the virus can become infected. Reports from China indicate adults are most affected and adults who also have other health conditions are at greater risk for severe illness.

How is COVID-19 treated?

COVID-19 is caused by a virus, so antibiotics won't work. There is no specific treatment for COVID-19.

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How can you prevent COVID-19?

There is no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. At this time, the CDC recommends people avoid all nonessential travel to China, South Korea, Iran, and Italy, which are experiencing large COVID-19 outbreaks.

You can prevent infection by doing the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Don't share drinking cups or utensils with other people
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home when you are sick

If you have recently returned from a country under a CDC travel advisory, contact the Sedgwick County Health Department at 316-660-7300. The Health Department will verify travel history and check for symptoms. The traveler may be asked to remain at home until 14 days after they left the affected country.

What should you do if you recently traveled to a country with COVID-19 transmission and got sick?

If you were in a country with ongoing COVID-19 transmission in the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, call your medical provider immediately, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms.

A list of affected countries can be found on the CDC's COVID-19 Information for Travel website (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html).

For More Information:
Sedgwick County Health Department
Epidemiology Program
1900 E. 9th St.
Wichita, KS 67214
(316) 660-7300
www.sedgwickcounty.org

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